



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0869MD-1 for Board of Education of Baltimore County

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>While the applicants vision is articulated effectively and appears comprehensive and coherent in nature, it lacks specificity at times.</p> <p>Additionally, through blanket statements such as "...by focusing on turning around our lowest-achieving schools through the personalization of student learning, to accomplish this, BCPS will focus on the following: "Blended learning" will be the vehicle through which BCPS will personalize student learning," the applicant narrows the focus of the vision to a format for learning (calling it "blended") but never returns to strategize what that currently looks like, how it will change and, specifically, what protocols or steps will be followed in order to do so initially although this ultimately supports personalized learning environments well in theory and in implementation.</p> <p>At the end of the vision section, the 7-step ingredient list that's challenging to narrow down is still strongly developed and supported throughout the application.</p> <p>Additionally, the vision plan is built upon ambitious goals which sustain current reforms and are necessary for ground-level but also atypical, progressive reforms to continue.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant shares a process approach to reform that will initially focus on middle and high schools with assessment and data to support each elements of reform.</p> <p>The applicant indicates that bandwidth will be needed, as will infrastructure for a portal - where students, parents, teachers and administration can "transparently" view the process of education, thereby ensuring mutual goal attainment. While these goals are high level, the applicant's response to sub-element (a) of the subcriterion rarely specify what forms of infrastructure are needed and the specifics that govern the idea of a portal which could be specified in a section where the strategic implementation process is expectedly well-defined or more clearly addressed.</p> <p>The differentiated-tiered-support-model stands alone and doesn't outline steps for improvement or implementation other than the fact that high-achieving students need less direction than do their lower-achieving counterparts, which is an important contrast to share.</p> <p>Changes in counseling, changes for parents and changes for educators - like the vision statement - lack specificity outside of the parameters of a catch-all "portal" and one that seems to organize, assess and develop information, data and documentation in various online capacities.</p> <p>Finally, the guidelines of the proposal target middle and high school students, a list of schools participating is provided, and participating students and their particular learning needs is based upon criterion included by category.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The application includes a significant amount of information detailing various district-wide reforms that will require implementation at various levels (site-based and central office departments) based on ambitious goals tied to a high-quality plan with outcomes for students aligned to implementation of a reform plan.</p>		

The applicant addresses large-scale goals and a logic model and theory for change in its implementation.

Specific targets and steps aren't as clear as they could be but the reform and change process are on track to begin. While a clear trajectory and path for sustainability aren't provided in detail, they are suggested and targeted toward the implementation reform necessary.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS offers a plan that is both achievable internally and with external stakeholders but maintains the ambitious element of goal-setting and accomplishment necessary for vision implementation in a sustainable manner through such a degree of federal funding.

The decreasing achievement gaps table reveals TBD for every category for several years; it's unclear why the applicant included this table and "TBD" does not meet the responsiveness criteria as adequately as is possible. While this baseline data is not provided, BCPS does present quite ambitious annual goals that mirror their vision plan of increasing equity and student performance (since '07). Summative assessment data (from implementation to collection and disaggregation) will be used to identify and target reading and mathematics proficiency goals which are achievable. It is noted that these tie directly into the pursuit of individualized learning environments and the BCPS vision for reform.

It remains important to note that BCPS shares graduation rates from 2010-2011 to which current goals are applied (indicating that the Maryland State Dept. of Ed will not provide 11-12 data until December '12) and the information shared in strongly upheld, the district can proceed based on the merit of the plan.

Additionally, college enrollment rates are present and reveal that BCPS has created a strong and unified track towards college interest with continued emphasis placed on the process of encouraging students and readily supporting their application to college as well as a reduction in the dropout rate and continued emphasis towards careers.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	13
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The applicant provides data to support links between learning outcomes, recent programming and the ambitious closing of achievement gaps - most notably the doubling in five years as well as additional gains in subgroups such as those set in place for students of color.</p> <p>With persistently low-achieving schools, the applicant applies the vision reform and implementation process with similar alignment indicating no spelled-out contrasting or differing trajectory.</p> <p>Significant reform initiatives prove useful and carefully selected as four-year cohort graduation rates increase as aligned to the percentage of highly qualified teachers per subject.</p> <p>System-wide disaggregated data, the development of an "educator dashboard" of programs and robust systems in place are evidence of success and demonstration of an increase in achievement over time.</p> <p>Student performance data publicized on websites and reviewed by site-level and central-office teams is a high-yield practice that improves stakeholder investment.</p> <p>Overall, it's quite clear the applicant has made progress in the most recent four years and continues on a trajectory toward additional advancement. Additionally, this section strongly targets subgroup populations and their data although information (that is currently not provided) regarding low-achieving schools and/or high-need sites would further support implementation and strategy steps in place if included in more detail.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	3
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		

While transparency does exist through various modes (Superintendent plan, pre-budget summer meetings, autumn budget meetings and automated calls to families), the level of transparency remains minimal if actual personnel salaries are not indicated in a high-traffic area (such as a school or LEA website).

Additionally, data such as capital outlay expenditures, non-personnel expenditures and various staff expenditures (both payroll and otherwise) should be both disaggregated and visible, not on the website of a mass media communication hub (where the option isn't truly available and no choice in the matter is made on the behalf of the applicant) - but instead on a website, portal or public domain belonging to the applicant that the applicant controls and modifies for the public as an access point.

Transparency in the process and practices both before, throughout and after the initial grant term is necessitated to ensure expenditures are relevant and practical, but of chief importance, to ensure that the four categories of expenditure justify funding use.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)

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(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

A clear hierarchy that functions to propel the LEA is found within the application and supports the work of the Superintendent and the Board of Education with rules and responsibilities in place for the Board of Education throughout the LEA.

Additionally, the Organizational Chart and Structural Relationships are both clear and sustain the larger work of the LEA in compliance with State legal, statutory and regulatory requirements.

BCPS has the authority noted in order to pursue the ambitions within the grant proposal/application.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

9

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant gathered groups of students, teachers, counselors, parents and other stakeholders to be included in the drafting and vision of this plan. Also, each building principal was consulted before a grant review team was created and teachers included on the grant-writing team although there is no evidence shared or documentation of leadership at a site-based level and data from principal groups.

Five letters of support are included which identify the strengths of the proposal although letters could be noted from individuals (students and parents) or student organizations to further develop a groundswell of support; these were not provided.

Regarding collective bargaining, no information is mentioned of collective bargaining or 70% of teaching group in agreement although LEA size and letters of support suggest collective bargaining must exist. Critically, there is an included union signature which indicates strong support from a collective bargaining host.

Participation of teachers in the process and on the steering committee for the grant proposal suggests that this element of the criteria is strong although full points would be awarded for the recognition of this fact as well as a clearer explanation of LEA-wide stakeholder engagement in some components of an otherwise very strong engagement and support public.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

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3

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant addresses 20 significant areas for improvement or barriers (called "gaps") but makes no direct alignment to the implementation of learning environments and/or the logic behind their progress through the efforts the grant funding will sustain. Points are awarded for thorough and introspective analysis of gaps/needs - but how those gaps are needs and how to address them through a high-quality plan is not indicated. Deliverables, quality, key goals, and a series of steps toward progress that were not provided would substantiate this analysis and catalyze stakeholders in the direction of the envisioned and adequately laid out reform and progress.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant thoroughly incorporates a wide variety of academic (both structural and instructional) strategies to increase the high achievement of all students (from various backgrounds, subgroups and across criterion levels) across the LEA.</p> <p>Implementation is broken down into blended content and competency-based assessments to target and sustain individualized learning environments. Through instruction not confined only to the classroom, the applicant ensures necessary selection criteria is strongly met as instruction is utilized to inform instruction for learning, implementation is broken down into projects using myriad tools (technological, social, personnel, data-collecting) and each component is connected back to the vision.</p> <p>Additionally, an intensive eLearning plan and curriculum audit in stages will support the high-quality plan and learning/achievement of all students served within the LEA.</p> <p>The high-quality plan is sound and provides staggered support that increases the purpose and relevance behind achievement and strategies in place LEA-wide. Noted within this section is that while leadership may direct and credit improvements in teaching and learning to instruction, this plan could be implemented with new leadership teams and could become self-sustaining due to its level of quality, ambition and achievability.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant has a high-quality plan for increasing the number of students receiving blended, online and differentiated personalized instruction.</p> <p>In various capacities the applicant elects to improve and expand PD opportunities, teacher capacity (skill and will to lead, to instruct), and provide support, help and more tangible access for highly effective teachers to needed instructional and developmental teaching strategies in various locations along a spectrum aligned to the applicant's strategic vision.</p> <p>The improvement of teaching and leading across all levels appears to hold priority over other concerns that may war for the attention of stakeholders. Different approaches, resources, evaluation systems, collective programming, training, policies, tools and specialty area focus (SPED/ELL) all contribute to an overarching level of quality that guards the essence of the high-quality plan that the applicant is implementing. Also, each staff member throughout the chain is held responsible and actively pursues professional development on personalized learning environments and their capacity for successful implementation of them.</p> <p>Full points are given for additional measures to ensure accountability for teacher leadership and administrative support as well as the effective delivery of teaching models LEA-wide.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	14
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Organizationally the applicant's strategic plan, <i>Blueprint for Progress</i> reveals the commitment of leadership and central office staff to support principals and their schools in the interest of student achievement and to help every student reach his/her potential. A service model supports this and appendix T is thoroughly detailed with timelines and benchmarks for accountable success.</p> <p>Additionally, the applicant's plan includes policy and workgroup formation with unions to investigate and explore school infrastructure, teacher workload, grading policy, quality professional development, and other issues to be identified.</p>		

Personalized learning is addressed in various capacities and functions underneath a staggered responsibility system set up within personnel, leadership, and at central office levels to hone in on data used to inform both instruction and programming.

The high-quality plan puts an emphasis on subcriterion like mastery of content, opportunities for mastery and resource supplements. Access to materials, tools and tech support are included and strategically support the overall vision.

While no area is left insufficiently addressed and all are covered, alternate populations could be covered more in-depth or strategically addressed to sustain the larger vision and implementation of the overall high-quality plan fo especially high-need low-achieving sites.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	8
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that all parents/students/families have consistent and myriad opportunities to access curriculum and supportive learning resources and materials. Websites with varied categorical information and digitally-streamed videos enhance this availability. The LEA utilizes Blackboard and a variety of databases, as well as has access to a Virtual High School and Virtual Learning Arena. For those who have no internet access, additional resources were not mentioned or included outside of e-centers. However, if a student cannot or will not travel to an e-center, the availability of the network and resources are then limited beyond the periphery of that student's control.

Additionally, within IT there is a help-desk for digital issues LEA wide and this helps mitigate concerns. Included in the tech support are online visuals, tutorials, newsletters and various other supportive documentation and material to aid those needing help.

Data systems are reportedly sharp and improve instructional data-storage LEA wide.

As a result of these, but because of no explicit indication of how non-internet homes will access the information, points on the lower end of the high range are awarded.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant ensures there are myriad strategies, supportive procedures and plans in place for effective implementation of their high-quality plan which provides for ongoing sustained and continuous improvement and reform LEA wide.

The applicant has vested engagement of stakeholders and is on track for updates that are consistent, relative to the length and span of the grant and reforms which are determined through careful and strategic timing and progress. Benchmarks define progress but do not thoroughly explain, connect and outline the metrics and assessments that will be utilized in the performance monitoring.

Through SCOPE (their system for ensuring all objectives are substantially and thoroughly met), interoperable data systems and an open data format, the applicant is truly cutting edge in terms of resolving network connectivity, bandwidth and outage complexities, as well as in hearing stakeholder and internal staff member concerns in the implementation period. Based on the applicant information shared, there are procedures and a leveled system in place to monitor, track and increase measures toward the reform.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
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(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Reaching a range of stakeholders, students, parents and families is key in the area of continuous improvement and in this regard, the applicant is providing various resources with which to reach all.

BCPS ensures the active engagement and inclusion of various public audiences; through a television station featuring highlights, guests, teacher initiatives and scrolling information, articles in local and regional media, Twitter and Facebook accounts as well as other mass media outlets, BCPS catalyzes the support of myriad groups and individuals who have a stake in the mission and procedures of the LEA.

Additionally an "Educated Parenting" and News element features BCPS information, updates, critical events and resources thoroughly; BCPS' multitude of initiatives to carry messages to stakeholders is robust and strongly supports their sound

vision.

Additionally, the applicant lists several internal systems for communication that support the larger mission, high-quality plan for implementation and process of grant compliance.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)

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4

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant strongly meets the performance measures in every area with strategic, policy-supported and evidence-based consistency through a combination of their high-quality plan, their vision and especially their reform outline as well as their implementation for continuous improvement.

In particular, approximately 12 performance measures are indicated and the full 14 measures are present.

The applicant addresses the rationale for each measure, the logistical process for timely and detailed information regarding the proposed plan and the access to that implementation and, of particular merit, the applicant identifies measures that outline the steps toward the performance based on such a large demographic area and LEA population.

While in each category, the applicant strongly meets the selection criteria with success, the applicant does not meet this measure regarding teachers who are effective and highly effective. The applicant includes a table which does not set targets for effective and highly effective teachers (a required performance measure). FAQ E-18a specifically indicates that applicants should understand that this decision is not fully responsive to the application's request for "ambitious yet achievable" targets. Within the table BCPS has included, within each box and frame "TBD" (presumably indicating 'to be determined') is shared and considered unresponsive.

Out of 5 possible points, 4 are awarded for an adequate and strong rationale.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

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5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant evaluates both short-term and long-term feasibility of the grant and its impact on the programs in place LEA wide as well as the application of SCOPE and the idea of the utilization of resources with which to allocate logistically throughout both the term and varied, connected levels of the grant. The CIPP Model as an evaluation tool is an evaluative approach to all Race to the Top activities, fully supports the ongoing, assessment-related (formative and summative) implementation of the grant and satisfies the strong vision of the project.

Through the strategic use of technology, the development of community partners/stakeholders and through the logistics of structure and routine policy (as well as modifications to said policy), the term of the grant will be continuously improving under the structures in place and with the cycling effectiveness measures in place to guard the investments.

Budget tables are thorough, clear and easily readable, broken down into direct costs, indirect costs and source funding to provide for the lifetime of the grant directly tied to a productive use of staff time and the improvement and results of individualized learning environments while compensating critical reform.

Overall, the applicant has systems and policy in place to evaluate and continually adjust and develop the investments of the grant.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
The applicant ensures each element and piece of the larger budget is in place evidenced by narrative as well as within tables, graphs, charts and information to support both the funding information and data but also to expose and clearly outline funding and its purposes.		
Anything used for a one-time investment is clearly designated and rationales are provided for each and a detailed expenditure report and trajectory is included.		
All funds are described (or shown) quite thoroughly and the proposal includes various grants, other support, federal funding packages and other sources of funding that support the critical academic and instructional measures that will take place over the course of the grant and in the term proceeding it.		

While one element of the Competitive Preference Priority remains unclear, (i.e. the mental health/social worker roles were not fully explored), in each category this presentation budget is strong and relevant to the multitude of tasks set out in the ambitious plan. The details of the report and supporting expenditure charts and tables qualify this applicant for a high score based on the merit of the section which sustains both the selection criteria and the extent to which the applicant maximizes both the potential, the previously build record of achievement and success and the championship of resources for funding bold reform.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
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(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The high quality plan written for implementation by the applicant supports the vision, sustainable reform ideas and thoroughly laid out strategy steps set to be put in place by the applicant.

All 7 projects are broken down by subject before project goals are outlined with a sustainability plan for each indicating the development, strategy steps, accountability measures and stakeholders required.

With matching grants, various totals become involved, the applicant proposes that both Race to the Top funds and matching grant funds from other sources are used to support the proposal to digitize curricula in the policy of digitizing curricula which further sustains individualized learning environments, the vision and such bold robust reform at a site-based level.

Each individual project has a strategy for sustainability in the implementation period and throughout the term of the grant and beyond; this data could be reviewed and revised to become a sustainable piece of information for leadership teams to support the high quality plan and reform vision.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	10

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant seeks funding to support the implementation of the Competitive Preference Priority which blend and integrate both internal and external public audiences and stakeholders toward the vision stated throughout the application which begets bold reform and sustainable change. A strong record of success and the positioning to implement the high-quality plans included further support the competitive preference.

Primarily this supports work to be completed in the social, mental and physical health area of participating, targeted schools. Using a 3-tiered model, the applicant creates equity and access while providing an intervention of goals and system-wide priorities that support the immediate and long-standing merit of a grant such as this in place which remains key to both the sustainability and long-term plan.

The integration of services and capacity building within communities, at sites and LEA wide is well planned-out, attendance rates are improving and baseline data can be well-collected.

Ultimately, the goals of the high-quality plan, the vision which supports it for the desired LEA and the implementation plan are strongly united toward the mission and purpose of the grant.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant truly epitomizes individual and 1:1 learning through a blended digitized curriculum and its need as well as through the support of 7 instructional, social and structural initiatives to develop student achievement and prepare students for college and career readiness.

The program supporting the implementation of the initiatives thoroughly discussed and highlighted throughout the application is driven by an extraordinary degree of vision and of ambitious programs. Additionally, implementation is supported through subgroups; for example, special education subgroup population guidelines are included and well-defined.

Without hesitation, the sum total amounts to an LEA capable and confident of promoting change and growth for each and every student as well as teaching/leading teachers to higher planes of learning and development as a community of learners whose trajectory is strongly supported with data and effective educational programming.

Total	210	187
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

The optional budget supplement is connected to program implementation and the RTTT-D grant - in fact, it appears naturally and authentically aligned to the grant and its vision/mission and implementation of a high-quality plan. Based on the selection criteria it would appear that the supplemental budget isn't intended to be supplemental but instead augments the work in place within the grant. Each element of funding specifically is met with rationale that meets the original (but not supplemental) criteria, with a high-quality plan aligned to the applicant and, most effectively, as a proposal to increase measures of individualized learning experiences, group problem-solving and the continuous improvement needed for effective implementation.

Ultimately, no points are awarded as a result of the applicant's supplemental funding being an extension of the original application/grant package.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0869MD-2 for Board of Education of Baltimore County

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore Country Public Schools' grant proposal sets forth a very comprehensive reform vision building on current successful strategies in progress, as it expands the vision building on the four core educational assurances. The applicant is clear on details of the student centered learning environment and student achievement goals supporting the vision. The five objectives

that will be at the core of the plan include: increasing number of graduating students, developing blended format of instruction, increasing effectiveness and quality of teaching and leading in targeted schools, integrating data and assessment system to support timely communication and implementing an on-line component to help students connect their learning to their life goals.

Applicant provides detailed plan of implementation in form of projects that will enable the LEA to meet the objectives. These projects are clear, specific, detailed and aligned with providing equity in student learning through highly effective teaching and learning plan. Clear direction is set to build on a successful track record of 5 years and staying the course through projects to meet the five objectives of the plan. This results in: an increase in the number of graduating students who are college career and life ready, a blended on line curriculum to support the implementation of the personalized student centered environment, and an increase in quality of teaching and learning. Because of the clear detailed plan of achieving the objectives set in the vision, this section receives a high score.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)

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(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore County Public Schools provides the criteria for selection of the participating students and schools. The initial implementation will focus on middle and high schools. Applicant states that assessment data supports the need to start the implementation at that level as there are significant performance gaps. Applicant's guidelines based on gaps in achievement are a sound way to select the schools and group of students attending those schools to participate in the plan. Tables provide detailed information for school demographics in 6-12 grades. The table provides the names of the schools, as well as number of educators and students participating in the grant. Applicant states that some of the numbers may be duplicated due to some students qualifying for multiple sub group criteria. The tiered support model, outlines how subgroups that are not meeting the standards will be supported vs the subgroups that are meeting or exceeding standards. Based on the solid criteria used to select the participating schools and students, this section receives a high score.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

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(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant lists goals and objectives that include addressing social and emotional, college and career goals, on-line technology access for parents and families, reform at individual school levels, blended learning and developing curriculum to support blended learning. The goals are focused on student achievement, targeting special group of students' progress. The successful implementation of goals and outcomes are planned out and supported by the SCOPE plan in Appendix T. The uniformity of the the implementation process will result in reform across the district. Applicant provides evidence to support the implementation of the plan.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

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8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore County Public Schools has included the summative assessment in this section. Applicant explains the criteria for determining status, determining growth and determining growth score to give a clear picture of the information in the tables provided. Applicant describes the gap reduction and the criteria determining achievement gap based on Maryland State Dept. of Ed. criteria. There is no gap scores and targets in the table as the information was not provided by Maryland State Dept. of Ed to the LEA. Goals are provided for three subgroups and overall students are included. Applicant also indicates the cohort graduation rate for the state of Maryland as basis for determining the rate of graduates. There is data for 2010-2011, but data is not available to the LEA yet for 2011-2012. Applicant lists goals based on the overall graduation rate in 2010-2011. Even though optional, the graduation rate data for 2010-2011 is listed, giving a better picture of the projected targets for the next 4-5 years. There are goals to increase graduation rate. Students are successful in meeting proficiency and students in subgroups are also showing improvement and moving forward. The plan will utilize technology, change the way teachers teach and share data. The applicant will be building on the current success to make even higher gains. Based on evidence provided supporting ambitious goals this section receives a high score.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Baltimore County Public Schools shares the clear record of success for the past five years in a very general manner. a and b- Applicant provides data on increase in student reading and math scores since 2007 for elementary and middle schools. Even though the data is not segregated by schools, it shows students progress in ELA and Math. Five year data supports steady progress and growth and higher achievement in reading vs math scores. The evidence is also provided in high proficiency growth rate in reading and math for middle school students in LEP, GATE, and Special Ed subgroups. Advanced placements data also shows increase. Data supports high number of high school graduates who met the HSA graduation. There are also noteworthy achievements in science for middle school students, reporting an increase of 13% since 2007. More students are graduating from high school and intend to attend college. The data provided is not specific to schools to determine lowest achieving schools. . c- Currently the parents, students and teachers are able to access student information through a variety of data systems. Applicant indicates a need to implement a one point data access, for easier aggregation and segregation of data. Data analysis are an integral part of the schools and central office evaluation process. This section received a high score at the top of the medium range. Applicant provides evidence to support progress in student achievement in the recent years.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	5
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Applicant states that it has an award winning budget process that provides total transparency, solicits public input and incorporates input into system and school level expenditure priorities. This is evident by examples of public meetings to discuss both operating and capital budgets, and public input is solicited through website participation. After soliciting input a final budget is adopted and presented to the County. The transparency is part of Superintendent objectives. The salaries of all employees who earn above an identified threshold is published and available on line. Applicant meets the criteria for high level of transparency, earning a high score in this section.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Baltimore County Public Schools has autonomy under Maryland law to carry out its vision for reform. Local authority has been delegated by the state and articulated in the policies that govern the board of education, the Superintendent and school systems. Annotated Code of Maryland specifies county board of education shall have control over education matters affecting counties and each country board should find every way possible to promote the interests of schools. Applicant includes evidence for autonomy to implement the personalized learning environment of this plan. Section receives high score.</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	9
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Baltimore County Public Schools provides details on communication with families, teachers and principals of the participating school. Principals and teachers after reviewing the initial proposal participated in providing information and writing the grant. The LEA's Teachers Association has been actively involved meeting with grant steering committee to provide feedback and has made suggestions that were incorporated in the grant, during the collaboration. PTA Council, Special Education Citizens' Committee and Committee for GATE were also asked to review the personalized learning opportunities. Applicant also includes letters of support from various organizations. There is no evidence to support student organization participation in the process. There This section receives a high score.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	5
(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>Baltimore County Public Schools has conducted an extensive needs analysis based on specific criteria. The criteria includes study of demographic changes impacting number of high need students, achievement gap present among different genders and subgroups and barriers to implementing reform. Based on a clear criteria for needs and gap analysis, areas of improvement are identified. Evidence of addressing the gaps are provided in Appendix C; timeline and implementation process as well as responsible parties are included in Appendix T. This section qualifies for a high score based on the information provided.</p>		

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant has clear vision of facilitating a cultural shift at the system level in order to create real change. The changes are based on student learning style, interest, flexible content, blended learning, assessment guiding instruction and change in teacher's role. Applicant highlights strategies to address meeting the goals of the plan. a. The strategies are: personalized student learning, increase in student engagement, supporting to develop 21st century skills and support students with high needs. This approach will enable participating students to learn at their own pace and interest level as they move towards college and career- ready requirements. The implementation plan begins with a College Management Tool. Applicant clearly states the criteria for selection of the online tool. The selection criteria will help to establish clear expectations for selecting the management tool. The College Management Tool provides students a way to identify areas where they can increase academic rigor by setting academic goals for their own learning. Developing blended learning environment will provide interest based deep learning opportunities. Blended learning will provide students with the differentiated learning opportunities and give them a chance to interact with one another, set goals and work towards achieving them. The digital learning experiences also will give students the exposure to cultures and different perspectives as they expand their learning environment from their classroom across the world. The on-line tool provides easy and effective access to students parents and educators. Parents can review course plan, monitor progress during college application process, research colleges. Applicant provides the necessary steps to support implementation of changes. Data is provided for implementation of blended learning environment. Students who are the target of this grant will have a variety of learning opportunities and a more engaging curriculum and environment to learn, as their chances of staying in school increase. Content for on-line courses will be developed to help provide high quality college and career-ready standards. Professional development for teachers to effectively use and access courses are supported by a step by step plan. The on-line courses will be using a different modality other than traditional learning , keeping students engaged longer. Creating and implementing an integrated system, will provide regular updated data to students and parents to determine progress. Applicant details the existing on-line resources and additional resources as they will become available when the system is fully implemented. The system will also provide students and teachers with hardware needed to implement the projects in the proposal. Applicant provides a detailed list of existing hardware and recommended hardware with cost per unit projections. Applicant states a plan for professional development to support implementation of the plan including a website for students and parents to understand and be able to use the digital tools.</p> <p>Applicant provides strong evidence to support learning and teaching for all students, through differentiated learning. The section receives a high score.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Applicant outlines seven detailed projects to be fully implemented in order to meet the five objectives of this plan. Professional development will be provided to support parents, staff and counselors in using the on-line resources. Professional development will ensure smooth implementation of the plan and provide a common knowledge across LEAs. Use of the resources will provide a better opportunity to frequently monitor student success or lack of progress and make instructional decisions. To help prepare teachers in meeting the needs of the students with special needs and students targeted in this plan, professional learning modules will be created to differentiate instruction. Change in the delivery of instruction is a major part of this plan and applicant successfully outlines steps that lead to smooth implementation of the plan for teachers and learners. The evaluation plan for teachers and administrators is not addressed as part of highly effective teacher and principal component. The section receives a middle score in high range.</p>		

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore County Public Schools central office has a strong commitment to support principals and their schools in order to maximize student achievement. Applicant provides evidence of established policies and procedures that will help with the implementation of the plan. Ample evidence is provided throughout the plan to provide school leaderships with autonomy needed to create and implement the personalized learning environment. Students can earn credit based on mastery with the help of external vendors such as Advanced Path Academics. Blended learning for credit recovery is currently implemented at four high schools. Students also can master the content in multiple ways and times. Baltimore County Public Schools has committed to the Universal Design for Learning and is a participating district with the Center for Applied Special Technology. Small group of teachers will be able to use their resources to implement differentiated instruction, helping students to learn the content in different ways. Students can also borrow laptops and air cards. Baltimore County Public Schools are also working closely with the Teachers Association of Baltimore County to ensure that schools and educators are also supported throughout the process. This section receives a high score based on information provided.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)

10

8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Applicant provides information on equal access of all stakeholders to content, tools and all learning resources. The equal access will help stakeholders to communicate and stay abreast of available learning resources. Through Race To the Top State funding the e-center project has been established, providing blended instructional learning opportunity. Technology has been at the center of the proposed reform for the LEA. Applicant details full implementation, hardware and software needs as well as staff development to ensure successful implementation of this phase of the plan. Criteria for exporting information in an open data format is supported by details in the plan. Once fully implemented, information technology systems will allow parents and students as well as educators to have access to student data to monitor progress. Stakeholders will also be able to aggregate and segregate data to look for trends. Students and parents are provided support by the Technology Department throughout the process. Applicant does not address student access to computers or online resources outside of school. Applicant provides evidence to support the successful implementation of the plan to monitor student learning and personalized plan. This section receives at low score in high range.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
Applicant indicates the plan to monitor, measure and publicly share information about the plan through established systems. The office of Research Accountability and Assessment will monitor key metrics regarding the plan and report progress through public reports and Board of Education meetings. Applicant fails to elaborate on the metrics and rubrics for ongoing corrections and improvements. Milestones for SCOPE are provided to implement different projects. The section receives a high score in the medium range.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
Baltimore County Public Schools outlines the communication tools that will be used to educate and involve the community in the implementation process. By providing means to communicate and share information and progress, if it becomes necessary to modify or change the course of action, applicant will be able to get support. An extensive list, along with strategies to communicate internally and publicly is included. Section receives a high score.		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
Baltimore County Public Schools outlines the performance measure that includes percentage of the students in 6-12 grades. Tables are provided with detail information on the rationale for each measure. State of Maryland started a teacher and principal evaluation pilot program, and Baltimore County Public Schools took part in the pilot program. It is stated that only teachers participated in the pilot and not the principals. There is a criteria to measure the growth data once the evaluation process is completed by December 2012. There is lack of evidence for the number or percentage of students by subgroups		

with highly effective teacher and highly effective principal. There is also lack of evidence for FAFSA. Based on the evidence provided, this section receives a score in the medium range.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore County Public Schools uses a specific model to evaluate. The evaluation model (CIPP) Context, Input, Process, Product, along with formative and summative evaluation will be used to monitor the plan. The detailed evaluation process for each of the four areas, Context, Input, Process, Product, and the formative and summative evaluation will provide a comprehensive and detailed information on the progress of the plan, leading to making sound decisions for any revisions that may be necessary. The Logic Model provides, needs, activities, target groups and outcomes. Outcomes are classified into short, long and intermediate term outcomes. This section receives a high score.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: Applicant provides narrative and summaries for each project. Overall budget appears to be sufficient to support the plan. Budget includes funds from other sources to support the implementation of the plan. Detailed reports supporting expenditures is included. Applicant failed to support the details of staffing in the Competitive Preference Plan. Only counselors are included in the budget. There is no line item for contracted social worker salaries. Due to lack of evidence to support all parts of the plan, this section receives a low score in the high range.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Applicant details the involvement of various Departments in the process of developing this plan. This includes the support, from different departments' budgets, if needed to sustain the plan. Applicant states community and educational community support in implementation of this plan. Additionally all seven projects are supported by detailed plan of how they will be sustained through general operating budget of Counselors, individual schools, budget from curriculum development, Title II, and Instructional Technology funds. To sustain professional development, trainer of trainer model will be developed through the life of the grant. To help fund wireless coverage, funds will be solicited from e-Rate, local and county government and additional grants. Applicant has a plan to sustain the reform past term of the grant. This section receives a high score.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: Baltimore County Public Schools indicates a strong track record of providing supports for students with a continuum of health and mental health service organization. Based on a comprehensive needs analysis, it was determined that to better serve students, it will be necessary to create a specialist position to oversee and coordinate the range of services, to hire social workers to divide time among the 29 identified schools and to implement a program serving the needs of students. There is a partnership with Baltimore County Department of Health to provide health care services to students in participating schools. The plan will provide these services through a nurse practitioner and /or physician. Decision making process was completed by the Superintendent of Baltimore County Public Schools and the Health Officer who convened a workgroup to address gaps in the behavioral health services available to students. The plan does indicate representatives of the school system, but does not specify how students and their families will participate in the process of the plan. Goals are specific and to monitor progress towards the goals their existing student services program, Student Support Team, will be used. The plan will build on the current services offered to students through Student Support Team and more specifically meet the needs of the students by addressing mental health concerns by specialists. Applicant provides a strong evidence for the need of such plan to help students and provides outline to implement this plan effectively. This section receives a high score.		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore Country Public Schools' grant proposal sets forth a very comprehensive reform plan building on current successful strategies in progress, as it expands on building the four core educational assurances. The applicant is clear on details of the student centered learning environment and student achievement goals supporting the plan. The five objectives that will be at the core of the plan include: increasing number of graduating students, developing blended format of instruction, increasing effectiveness and quality of teaching and leading in targeted schools, integrating data and assessment system to support timely communication and implementing an on-line component to help students connect their learning to their life goal. There is a major emphasis on helping to increase graduation rate and guide student learning towards college and career ready standards based on getting students involved in the process. Objectives of the plan are met through seven very detailed and comprehensive projects. Each project supports clear, specific, very detailed tasks. The projects are aligned together to provide equal access learning opportunities to all students. The projects are supported by staff development to help teachers create on-line courses as well as staff development to effectively teach in a blended classrooms. Through blended learning students are able to personalize and take ownership of their learning. Data assessment and assessment tool provide the crucial feedback to students, teachers and parents. Principal and teacher evaluation system based on student learning, will also help build a community of learners and professionals.

Because of the clear objectives, plan of action and details provided to support student learning while addressing the 4 core assurances, absolute priority 1 criteria is met.

Total	210	188
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

Optional Budget Supplement provided is in support of the Competitive Preference Priority. It is not to support a supplemental plan to address Absolute Priority 1.



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0869MD-3 for Board of Education of Baltimore County

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	10

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS presents a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that encompasses the four core educational assurance areas. They articulate clear and credible approaches to the goals listed in their vision:

- increasing the number of graduating students who are college, career and life ready,
- developing blended, online curriculum that supports personalized, student-centered learning environments,
- increasing the quality of teaching,
- incorporating new data systems into system-wide decision making to improve instruction, identify highly effective teachers, and track progress at the system, school and student level, and
- implementing an online tool connecting what students do in the classrooms to their life goals.

They are targeting students who have the highest risk of not completing high school graduation requirements and not pursuing post-secondary education.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)

10

10

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a) - (c) BCPS' proposal targets middle and high school students, designated high need based on three criteria: their eligibility for free and reduced meals (FARMS), identification as an LEP student, and identification as a special education student. Some of their total counts may include duplicates, as some students fall into more than one category. They include lists based on criterion (c).

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

10

10

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS describes a comprehensive, high-quality plan for its reform proposal, titled Student Centered Opportunities for Personalized Education (SCOPE), that encompasses the four assurance goals. This plan scales up their reform to support district-wide change, helping them reach their outcome goals of higher student learning. They present this plan in Appendix T in which activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties are fully developed, credible and reflective of their theory of change.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS presents ambitious yet achievable annual goals that reflect their vision of improved student learning performance and increased equity.

(a) BCPS describes the performance summative assessments, methodology for determining status and for determining growth. The increments of improvement for their overall students and three subgroups appear appropriate.

(b) They provide the formulas for determining gap reduction but not the actual data because the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will not have its growth-based and gap-based data until December 2012.

They have an option to present the 2010-11 data instead but did not. Including that data would have provided a measure of BCPS' goal for decreasing the gap.

(c) MSDE will not have 2011-12 data available until December 2012; meanwhile, BCPS use the 2010-11 data and determined achievable incremental improvement goals based on that data.

(d) BCPS relies on the National Student Clearinghouse to obtain graduates' enrollment data, and the most recent data BCPS can provide is the class of 2010-11. Based on that data, the district plans to increase the rates by 1% point each year through the 2016-17 school year.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	12
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		

BCPS presents a series of data points highlighting a record of success over the past four years in advancing student achievement and increasing equity.

(a) They describe improved learning outcomes in a number of areas, particularly for their high-risk students: consistently improved middle school math and reading scores, increased enrollment in AP courses (percentage increase for low-income students doubled over five years, as well as increases for African American and Latino students), and higher passing rates in algebra and biology. Their graduation rates increased modestly, and intent to enroll in college was as high as 82% for 5,719 seniors who responded to their survey.

(b) While they present ambitious and significant reforms for their identified subgroups, they do not provide sufficient information on how they would reform their persistently lowest-achieving schools.

(c) They explain their current practice of collecting, managing and analyzing student performance data, which is accessible to educators, students and families. Their work in progress involves integrating their various data systems for ease of locating and analyzing data and creating an educator dashboard, giving teachers one entry point to view all data.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)

5

5

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS describes open, transparent methods to inform its school community of its practices and investments. The district goes to great lengths to seek parent input (CFO's robocalls to every student's home inviting parent to attend meetings or comment online), the Superintendent conducts community and staff input meetings (Superintendent Entry Plan), and the district meeting agendas and minutes are posted online and through Facebook, Twitter and a new blog.

(a) - (d) The district publishes all of its employees' salary (above an identified threshold) online through the local newspaper.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS reports it has sufficient autonomy to bring forth its vision set out in this application. They quote provisions from the Constitution of Maryland that gives their local school board and superintendent authority to "promote the interests of its schools."

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

8

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS' application includes a signature of support from the president of the district's teacher association on the application assurance form. In addition, they describe a number of ways in which they sought and received meaningful stakeholder engagement and support.

(a) They began with the principals of the identified schools and continued with selected teachers, the Teachers Association of Baltimore County, Baltimore County PTA Council, Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee, Citizens' Advisory Committee for G/T Education. In addition, the district worked with the organizations involved with their STEM alliances.

(i) They describe how representatives of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County met with the grant steering committee to provide feedback for the personalized learning initiative. The association also participated in a half-day session on blended learning, and the steering committee incorporated the Association's suggested changes into the proposal.

(b) Letters of support from key stakeholders are included (BC Department of Economic Development, BC STEM Alliance, and parent advisory groups). However, there were no letters from student organizations or individual parents.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

5

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS lists a series of needs and gaps among its subgroups and schools in this section of the application. Their high-quality plan for an analysis of their current status in implementing personalized learning environments can be found in Appendix T where they provide a comprehensive plan including activities, deliverables, timelines, and responsible parties.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	20
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS provides extensive information on its plan to improve and personalize learning as described in the selection criteria for this section, preparing students for college and careers.</p> <p>(a)(i) BCPS describes three projects designed to help students understand that what they are learning is key to their success in accomplishing their goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • online tools and support to participating students to help students identify their interests, explore careers, set academic goals, and manage what they need to accomplish to meet their goals, • blended learning experiences with rich resources for interactivity, engaging and relevant learning activities, and opportunities for students to make personal decision about what they learn and how, • creating and implementing an integrated system in which educators, students and parents have a single entry point to access materials 24/7, receive personalize guidance and feedback, and access self-paced learning materials. <p>(ii) They describe career and college management tools, linked to college and career-ready graduation requirements, that will assist students in understanding how to structure their learning to achieve their goals and to measure their progress. They are currently piloting two programs (Naviance and Connect Edu) and will select one based on the results of their pilot.</p> <p>(iii) They plan to develop blended learning environments that will provide deep learning experiences in areas of academic interest. They currently are exploring or implementing a wide array of digital tools (e.g., Safari Montage, Blackboard Collaborate, PBworks, Edmodo, etc.).</p> <p>(iv) - (v) Their goals and objectives included in Appendix C indicate that their blended learning experiences will cause students to work together with peers to develop teamwork and collaboration skills, communicate online with people across the globe, engage in digital field trips to visit distant museums and other place of educational value, and connect students to real-world experiences and people of other cultures and perspectives.</p> <p>(b)(i) Their personalized and blended learning plans include digital tools designed to enable students to achieve academic and graduation goals. They describe technology tools that allow students to proceed at a self-pace, that have rich resources for learning, and are aligned with college and career-ready standards. They also are piloting two career and college management tools that aid students in identifying coursework and skills to meet their post-secondary goals.</p> <p>(ii) They present a thorough and detailed description of the instructional tools to which teachers will have access (blended learning, single access point to student data, differentiation, project-based learning, etc.)</p> <p>(iii) They describe a wide-range of digital tools with high-quality content and relevant activities for their students (Blackboard Collaborate, Edmodo, PBworks, and Safari Live to enhance communication and collaboration skills and digital curriculum content aligned to Common Core State Standards).</p> <p>(iv)(A) - (B) They describe a plan to integrate into a single entry point the various digital content and student performance data for quick and easy access for educators, students and parents. This integrated management system includes digital content, resources, and their career and college guidance programs.</p> <p>(v) They describe plans for high-need students that emerge from the benefits of blended learning: access for teachers to online resources for students, ability to closely track and monitor student progress through their integrated dashboards, online assessments, and utilize visual and auditory features offered online for special education and English Language Learners.</p> <p>(c) They describe plans to establish a specific website for students and their parents to understand and access the digital tools at their disposal. They will also conduct separate workshops for parents.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	18
<p>(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS presents an approach to teaching and leading designed to improve instruction and increase their capacity to support student progress as described in the selection criteria for this section through six strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve and expand professional learning and growth • increase teacher capacity 		

- provide access to easy, effective and convenient instructional management
- provide support for differentiation
- provide help with at-risk learners
- increase access to highly effective teachers

(a)(i) Their plan calls for all participating educators to engage in training and teams that support effective implementation of learning environments and strategies. Counselors will receive specialized training in the career and college management tool the district will choose soon. All educators, including paraprofessionals, counselors and administrators, will receive professional development focused on personalized learning.

(ii) They will develop curriculum and instructional strategies within the context of blended learning that encompasses best practice (collaboration, project-based learning, videos and audio). They have a well-developed plan to complete this task.

(iii) They present a plan on integrating their data management systems that will simplify the manner in which educators, students and parents can access student progress toward meeting the content aligned with college and career-ready standards.

(iv) They mention that administrators will be encouraged to use participation in their personalized learning professional development as part of the teacher evaluation process. However, there is no clear discussion on how feedback provided by their appraisal system will be used to improve teachers' and principals' practices. Detailed information on their teacher and principal evaluation systems is lacking.

(b)(i) - (iii) They describe tools and data that will help educators identify optimal instructional strategies and response to individual needs. They present a plan in which all educators will receive training in differentiation, personalized learning, the career and college management tool, and equity. A series of other types of specialized professional development activities include use of the adopted digital tools, grading and reporting, and blended learning in content areas.

(c)(i) They describe a detailed, school-based implementation model of professional development focused on their initiatives surrounding personalized learning. Information to help teams assess and improve teacher effectiveness comes from a collaboration of administrators and educator who review assessments, student artifacts, teacher insights, student and parent feedback. They mention using the teacher evaluation system as a means of motivating and tracking participation in their training of personalized learning environments (professional development plans for SCOPE project).

(ii) They present a plan and commitment to improve school progress continuously through training, systems and practices.

(d) While they describe an extensive plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals (Appendix C: Scope Reform Plan), they do not present their activities within the context of a high-quality plan that includes specific timelines and responsible parties.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	15
<p>(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS presents a high-quality plan to support implementation through policies and infrastructure to provide every student and educator with support and resources they need.</p> <p>(a) The key departments in the central office (Curriculum and Instruction, Technology, Instructional Technology, Student Support Services, School Counseling Services) have been collaborating between and among each other to provide support and services to participating schools.</p> <p>(b) Principals and their school leadership teams exercise autonomy in a number of areas of school management and governance (master schedules, elective course offerings, and staffing).</p> <p>(c) Students can progress and earn credit based on mastery through the use of an external vendor, Advanced Path Academies, which is an online program offering blended learning opportunities for credit recovery. There are plans to expand this.</p> <p>(d) The district works with the Center for Applied Special Technology to develop curriculum, instruction and assessment practices through Universal Design for Learning, giving students opportunities to demonstrate mastery multiple times and ways.</p>		

(e) They describe previous grants that provided training on accessibility for students and will continue to study and implement such practices.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)

10

10

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS presents a high-quality plan in Appendix T that includes support for project implementation of its blended learning and integrated system projects and goals.

(a) BCPS ensures that students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have full access to content, tools, and other learning resources. Their website provides links for these groups to access the curriculum, their strategic plan and master plan, and a large number of instructional resources and databases any time, any day.

(b) Support is provided to all stakeholders through the district's Department of Technology, which includes a help desk accessible during the day. Parents receive support through newsletters, websites, voice and email communication.

(c) Their information technology systems provide data to schools, students and parents through their use of Student Tracking and Registration System, schools' student scheduling system, and the special education system.

(d) The district's Office of Information Systems Management provides services to develop and maintain data integration, information systems administration and operational support, and infrastructure administration and support.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	10
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS presents a limited strategy for implementing a rigorous, continuous improvement process that provides timely and regular feedback on progress toward project goals. They designate their Office of Research, Accountability, and Assessment as the major department responsible for monitoring and measuring information about RTT initiatives; however, they do not describe how often and to what extent feedback will be shared with the school community. In addition, they do not provide substantive information on the "key metrics."</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS describes comprehensive strategies for ongoing communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Examples include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News releases to local papers • District website • Monthly programs for the school community on their local TV channel • Twitter and Facebook • Intranet for communicating directly with staff 		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)-(c) BCPS presents appropriate student performance measures with their rationale for selecting each measure. They also include ways in which the measure is rigorous (the use of standardized and local assessments), timely (results can be obtained within weeks of standardized data at the end of semesters for local data), and formative (they will make adjustments if scores do not increase).</p> <p>However, the performance measure for developing effective and highly effective teachers is problematic. They describe participating in the state's pilot program of a new teacher and principal evaluation system reflective of the goals within the RTT framework. A letter of support from the state superintendent states that in the version of the application she received,</p>		

BCPS failed to mention their participation in this pilot during the 2011-12 school year. After BCPS was reminded of this omission in their original application, they corrected this current version. One weakness with this performance measure is that the district appeared unaware of its initial involvement in which 11 schools and 49 teachers did, indeed, participate. Second, without a set of ambitious yet achievable annual targets in this area, BCPS is not fully responsive to this selection criteria.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

BCPS describes an extensive evaluation approach for all aspects of its RTT activities, ranging from curriculum content to digital tools to professional development. They plan to employ the evaluation model, Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP), that examines the various layers of their initiative. This process is ongoing, comprehensive, formative and summative, leaving no stone unturned during and after the implementation of the grant.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a)-(b) BCPS presents a comprehensive budget that identifies most of the funds it needs to support its projects, and it appears reasonable and sufficient to support its development and implementation. However, aspects of the Competitive Preference Priority appear to be missing. Neither the project specialist nor professional development activities for other Student Support Team members appear to be included in the budget.</p> <p>(c)(i)-(ii) They provide thoughtful rationale for each investment and priority, including other funds that will supplement the proposal, and they have identified funds that will be used for one-time investments.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	10
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS provides clear plans for sustainability for each of its seven proposed projects. This includes the activities that will occur later (BCPS is seeking funding sources, including the e-Rate to sustain their wireless coverage), a timeline for each project (continued development of blended learning environments will continue through the 2016-17 school year), and responsible parties (school team leaders, project manager, program evaluators).</p> <p>The plan includes appropriations beyond the time of the grant's implementation. For example, many resources needed for their initiatives are part of the district technology plan that has a budget covering the next five years and includes a commitment of 1.3 million dollars from the district to support the replacement and updating of equipment.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	9
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>BCPS presents a comprehensive plan to integrate public and private resources for the benefit of their students, augmenting what currently is provided for students' social, emotional and behavioral needs.</p> <p>(1) They have a current partnership with the Baltimore County Department of Health to provide healthcare services in participating schools through school-based health centers, a partnership with Baltimore County Department of Social Services to provide social services and counseling, and 86 schools have partnerships with one or more community mental health providers.</p> <p>(2) They have identified eight population-level desired results that focus on educational results, ranging from increases in attendance rates to decreases in suspensions to increases in students on track to graduate.</p>		

(3)(a) The Student Support Team (nurse, counselors, psychologist, pupil personnel worker, and in some cases social worker) is delegated with the task of identifying high-need students not responding to interventions the team has determined. Regular follow-up activities occur, and a community mental health service provider supports the attainment of the student's goals.

(b) The Student Support Team uses data from teachers and administrators to identify appropriate interventions for struggling students. Their model reflects the Response to Intervention model with parallel goals and objectives.

(c)-(d) The Superintendent and Health Officer from the BC Department of Health have established a committee to conduct a needs assessment to identify ways to scale the services beyond participating students. Their goal is a continuum of coordinated services over time.

(4) They plan to create a position of a specialist who would coordinate behavioral health care efforts within the schools and the community partners.

(5)(a) Their partnership (BCPS and BC Health Department) contracted with the Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland to conduct the needs assessment of all of the LEA's schools.

(b) The newly-created specialist's position will assess the resources available in each school to identify gaps and will work with principals to strengthen partnerships with community mental health providers.

(c) The Student Support Team will address the compelling needs of participating students, making decisions on the procedures and interventions to support the student.

(d)-(e) The SST personnel engage parents or guardians in their decisions, and their role is to monitor the student's progress over time, ensuring that appropriate interventions are working.

(6) They have listed annual performance measures as required in this section. It is not yet possible to determine the extent to which they are ambitious yet achievable because they do not have current baseline data. They intend to include the data in their student information system in the spring of 2013.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Baltimore County Public Schools has convincingly demonstrated throughout their application their ability and desire to address the core educational assurances. Their goals and objectives are designed to prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace through their development and implementation of blended learning environments, a career and college management tool, personalized learning instructional strategies, and the use of effective digital tools. They are committed to integrating their data systems and keeping student performance data front and center. Their extensive professional development plans target participating educators and building leaders to grow and adapt to 21st century teaching and learning. Finally, they articulate the need and mission of improving the academic achievement of all of their students, particularly those who are struggling, no matter what the cause. Without a doubt, they meet Absolute Priority 1.

Total	210	188
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

BCPS is requesting additional funding to support financially the programs and personnel described in its Competitive Preference Priority (CPP). The selection criteria for this section specifically state that the request for this funding must be designed as a separate project that, if not funded, will not adversely affect the applicant's ability to implement its proposal. It

appears that the plans stated in the CPP are directly related to the district's goal of meeting Absolute Priority 1. In other words, addressing the social, emotional and behavioral needs of BCPS' students as presented in the CPP, appears to be an integral part of the overall initiatives - not a separate project.